

THINKING DIFFERENTLY

Books on Creativity and Innovation

The current bestseller list is chock-full of books about creativity, innovation, insight, decision making and idea generation in the workplace. They offer so many new concepts and ideas that it's changing the way we think about which businesses will succeed in the future. With so many recent advances in neuroscience, researchers can now pinpoint the moments leading up insight and creativity, and this opens up opportunities to translate these qualities into workplace skills. So in today's competitive and unpredictable job market, creativity and insight can often be the difference between two otherwise equally talented individuals. Indeed, in some forward-thinking companies like Google, 3M, and Zappos, the nurturing of creativity and innovation among employees is a high priority in the company culture.

"There have been many books written in the past few years that talk about innovation, creativity, storytelling, and positivity," says Francine Fabricant, MA, EdM, a career counselor, author, and Hofstra University Continuing Education instructor. "They talk about finding meaning in our work and our lives, but they also give concrete suggestions. These books are evidence-based, and can teach us how small actions can improve our lives. The most successful job seekers are often adding value in unexpected ways – through their creativity, empathy, ability to work with others, even their entrepreneurial skills."

Here is a small sampling of books that can help you understand what science is learning about creativity and innovation, and how these skills can help you stand out in a competitive marketplace. There are also many other books to explore, as well as blogs, articles and websites.

A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future by Daniel Pink

Using stories and studies, the author contrasts left-brain vs. right-brain thinking and how these skills can translate into success in business and the job market.

Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us by Daniel Pink

This book examines what motivates people. While money used to be the key motivational factor in the workplace, today's workers are motivated by more intangible benefits, such as autonomy and the freedom to be creative.

The Flip Manifesto by Daniel Pink

Free download at danpink.com

Author Daniel Pink offers a tantalizing piece that asks readers to take age-old beliefs and turn them on their heads. The outcomes will surprise you!

Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking by Malcolm Gladwell

It's the first few seconds of meeting someone new or walking into a room you've never been in before or reading the first few sentences of an article. In the blink of any eye, your mind forms a conclusion. The author calls it "rapid cognition" and he advises readers not to discount its importance.

The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference by Malcolm Gladwell

Gladwell writes brilliantly about the moment when a product, idea or disease crosses an imaginary threshold to become a fad, a phenomenon, or an epidemic. Gladwell introduces us to fascinating people, enlightens us with intriguing statistics, and indulges us with good old-fashioned storytelling.

Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

The author, one of the most revered thinkers in the field of positive psychology, coined the term "flow," a state in which we are so focused on an activity (whether personal or work-related), that it helps to produce optimal enjoyment and outcome.

Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

The author continues his thinking about how "flow" leads to creative moments and innovations that help to enrich our lives.

The Design of Business: Why Design Thinking is the Next Competitive Advantage by Roger L. Martin

Roger Martin believes that businesses rely far too heavily on analytics in making important business decisions. This book explains how we can business leaders can use "design thinking" to improve the bottom line.

How We Decide by Jonah Lehrer

In this must-read book, we learn about some new and unexpected discoveries in the field of neuroscience, and how this research can help us to make optimal decisions.

Imagine: How Creativity Works by Jonah Lehrer

In this fascinating book, Jonah Lehrer shatters some myths of workplace output, teaching us instead that we can all be creative by changing our thought processes and viewing creativity as less mysterious and more methodical.

Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation by Steven Johnson

The author explores innovation in science, technology, business, and the arts, from Darwin's theory of evolution to YouTube, and examines the ideas, tools and environment that will allow for the generation of innovative future ideas.

The Business Model Innovation Factory: How to Stay Relevant When the World is Changing by Saul Kaplan

The author, founder of the Business Innovation Factory in Providence, is obsessed with how businesses can innovate and thrive in an ever-changing world.

The Art of Critical Decision Making by Professor Michael Roberto

The Teaching Company (24-lecture set)
thegreatcourses.com

This eye-opening lecture series teaches us how critical decisions are made by individuals, business leaders and government officials. Professor Roberto offers tips and techniques for making informed decisions. ●

